Remarks

The Office Action dated August 11, 2006 has been carefully reviewed and the foregoing amendment has been made in consequence thereof.

Claims 1, 3-6, 8-11, 13-16, and 18-19 are pending in this application. Claims 1-19 stand rejected. Claims 2, 7, 12, and 17 have been cancelled.

In accordance with 37 C.F.R. 1.136(a), a one month extension of time is submitted herewith to extend the due date of the response to the Office Action dated August 11, 2006, for the above-identified patent application from November 11, 2006, through and including December 11, 2006. In accordance with 37 C.F.R. 1.17(a), authorization to charge a deposit account in the amount of $120.00 to cover this extension of time request also is submitted herewith.

The objection to Claim 1 for informalities is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 has been amended as suggested to correct the typographical error. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the objection to Claim 1 be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claims 1-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 101 is respectfully traversed.

Independent Claims 1, 6, and 11 have each been amended to recite the method step of "generating a result that indicates the performance of the major components of the power plant". Applicant submits that the methods recited in independent Claims 1, 6, and 11 produce a useful tangible result that indicates the performance of the major components of a power plant, and therefore, meet the requirements of Section 101.

Claims 2, 7, and 12 have been canceled.

Claims 3-5 depend from independent Claim 1, Claims 8-10 depend from independent Claim 6, and Claims 13-15 depend from independent Claim 11. Applicant submits that dependent Claims 3-5, 8-10, and 13-15 likewise meet the requirements of Section 101.

For the reasons set forth above, Applicant respectfully requests that the Section 101 rejection of Claims1-15 be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claims 1, 3-6, 8-11, 13-16, and 18-19 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Maguire et al. (US 5,331,579) is respectfully traversed.

Maguire et al. describe a modeling system that arranges the model in a hierarchical structure of communicating and independently executing object modules controlled by an overall supervisor. Each object module includes a deterministic equation based aging model, a statistical based component aging model and expert rules that combine the deterministic and statistical model with the knowledge of experts to determine the current state of the object.

Independent Claim 1 of the present application recites a modular method of modeling a power plant that includes " selecting a major component module model from a library of component module models for each major component of the power plant, each major component module representing a power plant major component of a unique configuration; inputting initial model information into a database for the selected modules by inputting the initial model information into a spread sheet associated with each selected module, the initial model information including at least one of operating parameters, design data, convergence criteria, and a maximum number of passes . . . ."

Maguire et al. do not describe nor suggest a method as recited in Claim 1. Particularly Maguire et al. do not describe nor suggest a method that includes inputting initial model information into a database for the selected modules by inputting the initial model information

into a spread sheet associated with each selected module. The Office Action, at page 6, admits that "Maguire does not teach inputting initial model information comprises inputting initial model information into a spread sheet associated with each selected module". Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claim 1 is patentable over Maguire et al.

Claims 3-5 depend from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of dependent Claims 3-5 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 3-5 likewise are patentable over Maguire et al.

Independent Claim 6 of the present application recites a modular method of modeling a power plant that includes "selecting at least two component module models from a library of component modules, each component module representing a power plant component of a unique configuration; inputting initial model information into a database for the selected modules by inputting initial model information into a spread sheet associated with each selected module, the initial model information including at least one of operating parameters, design data, convergence criteria, and a maximum number of passes . . . ."

Maguire et al. do not describe nor suggest a method as recited in Claim 6. Particularly Maguire et al. do not describe nor suggest a method that includes inputting initial model information into a database for the selected modules by inputting the initial model information into a spread sheet associated with each selected module. The Office Action, at page 6, admits that "Maguire does not teach inputting initial model information comprises inputting initial model information into a spread sheet associated with each selected module". Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claim 6 is patentable over Maguire et al.

Claims 8-10 depend from independent Claim 6. When the recitations of dependent Claims 8-10 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 6, Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 8-10 likewise are patentable over Maguire et al.

Independent Claim 11 of the present application recites a modular method of modeling a power plant that includes "creating a power plant model by selecting a major component module model from a library of component module models for each major component of the power plant, each major component module representing a power plant major component of a unique configuration; linking the selected modules together to enable data exchange between modules; inputting initial model information into a database for the selected modules by inputting initial model information into a spread sheet associated with each selected module, the initial model information including at least one of operating parameters, design data, convergence criteria, and a maximum number of passes . . . ."

Maguire et al. do not describe nor suggest a method as recited in Claim 11. Particularly Maguire et al. do not describe nor suggest a method that includes inputting initial model information into a database for the selected modules by inputting the initial model information into a spread sheet associated with each selected module. The Office Action, at page 6, admits that "Maguire does not teach inputting initial model information comprises inputting initial model information into a spread sheet associated with each selected module". Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claim 11 is patentable over Maguire et al.

Claims 13-15 depend from independent Claim 11. When the recitations of dependent Claims 13-15 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 11, Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 13-15 likewise are patentable over Maguire et al.

Independent Claim 16 of the present application recites "a power plant modular modeling system comprising a database operationally coupled to a computer . . . said computer configured to: . . . receive initial model information from a user for the selected modules, the initial model information including at least one of operating parameters, design data, convergence criteria, and a maximum number of passes; store the initial model information in a spread sheet associated with each selected module . . . ."

Maguire et al. do not describe nor suggest a system as recited in Claim 16. Particularly Maguire et al. do not describe nor suggest a system that includes a computer configured to store the initial model information in a spread sheet associated with each selected module. The Office Action, at page 6, admits that "Maguire does not teach inputting initial model information comprises inputting initial model information into a spread sheet associated with each selected module". Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claim 11 is patentable over Maguire et al.

Claims 18-19 depend from independent Claim 16. When the recitations of dependent Claims 18-19 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 16, Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 18-19 likewise are patentable over Maguire et al.

For the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 102(b) rejection of Claims 1, 3-6, 8-11, 13-16, and 18-19 be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claims 2, 7, 12, and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maguire et al. (US 5,331,579) in view of Kruger et al. (US 2003/0063702) is respectfully traversed.

As explained above, Maguire et al. do not describe nor suggest a method as recited in Claim 1, a method as recited in Claim 6, a method as recited in Claim 11 or a system as recited

in Claim 16. Accordingly, Applicant submits that independent Claims 1, 6, 11, and 16 are patentable over Maguire et al.

Kruger et al. describe a computer model of water in a boiling water nuclear reactor. The program code for the modeling/simulation routine of the Kruger et al. invention may be written, for example, in a Visual Basic module in an Excel workbook. Also, sample data may be collected in the field and may be input to the modeling/simulation program from a spreadsheet.

Maguire et al. and Kruger et al., alone or in combination, do not describe nor suggest a method as recited in Claim 1, a method as recited in Claim 6, a method as recited in Claim 11 or a system as recited in Claim 16. Particularly, Maguire et al. and Kruger et al., alone or in combination, do not describe nor suggest a method that includes inputting initial model information into a database for the selected modules by inputting the initial model information into a spread sheet associated with each selected module, or a system that includes a computer configured to store the initial model information in a spread sheet associated with each selected module. The Office Action, at page 6, admits that "Maguire does not teach inputting initial model information comprises inputting initial model information into a spreadsheet associated with each selected module". Also, Kruger et al. teaches a computer model that is not a modular method. The method of Kruger et al. does not employ a modular approach. Rather, Kruger et al. teaches using a single spreadsheet for the entire model. Because Kruger et al. do not teach a modular computer model, Kruger et al. do not teach inputting initial model information into a database for the selected modules by inputting the initial model information into a spread sheet associated with each selected module. Modifying the method of Maguire et al. with the single spreadsheet taught by Kruger et al. does not overcome the deficiencies of Maguire et al. Therefore, combining the teachings of Maguire et al. and Kruger et al. does not describe nor

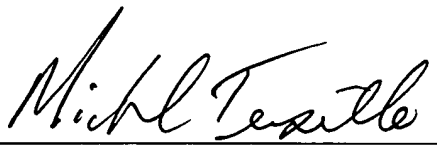
suggest all the elements of independent Claims 1, 6, 11, and 16. Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claims 1, 6, 11, and 16 are patentable over Maguire et al. and Kruger et al., alone or in combination.

Claims 2, 7, 12, and 17 have been canceled.

For the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 103(a) rejection of Claims 2, 7, 12, and 17 be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, all the claims now active in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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